



Advantage

Beef Programme



THIS IS THE ADVANTAGE BEEF PROGRAMME

Building a secure,
sustainable business
model for beef farmers
and their families

It's a dynamic new enterprise partnership created to help farmers build a secure, sustainable beef farming business for their families and for future generations. It provides greater assurances to farmers through four key enterprise drivers: best-in-class genetics, process efficiencies, a guaranteed minimum base price and valuable supports. The Programme's inclusive terms allow dairy, beef and suckler farmers to join. Together our aim is to strengthen relationships between dairy and beef farmers.

The Programme is built on many years of extensive research and development in partnership with beef farmers across Ireland and the UK. Since 2014, Blade Farming, an ABP led integrated scheme, has proved extremely successful. The Advantage Beef Programme is a continuation of Blade Farming, putting the scheme into action on a much larger scale throughout Ireland.

WHAT CATTLE ARE ELIGIBLE?



We believe flexibility is important to allow the greatest number of farmers to avail of the benefits the Programme offers. Our all-inclusive terms mean dairy, beef and suckler farms are eligible to join.

Participation is subject to the following requirements:

- Animal must be purchased from a Bord Bia Quality Assured herd
- Animal must be reared all of life in a Bord Bia Quality Assured herd (All of life in an Advantage Beef Programme herd not required)
- All breeds are eligible with the exception of Jersey cattle or beef cattle with 12.5% Jersey breeding/any other extreme dairy breeds
- Includes cattle sourced from the dairy and beef herd
- Steers and heifers must be a minimum 6 months (183 days) on the finishing farm
- Young bulls under 16 months must be a minimum 6 months (183 days) on the finishing farm
- Maximum of 1 movement (2 residencies)
- There is an exception of 1 extra movement for animals that have been reared in a contracted rearing system. It must be an ABP approved rearing farm and calves must be moved onto the finishing farm before reaching five months of age
- Minimum of 20 cattle per finisher herd
- Steers, heifers and young bulls (Maximum of 10% of scheme cattle to be young bulls)
- Suckler bred young bulls will be prioritised over dairy bred bulls. All bulls entering the Programme will be considered on a case by case basis

PROGRAMME PRICING STRUCTURE

The first integrated beef scheme in Ireland to pay a Sustainability Bonus to farmers

The Programme's pricing structure is outlined below.*

- A Sustainability Bonus of €0.20/kg will be paid on all Programme cattle meeting scheme requirements
- All prices are in addition to the relevant Quality Assurance (QA) Bonus
- All cattle will be paid on the average quoted price (AQP) for steers and heifers of the 7 ABP plants on the week of slaughter on the grid
- By way of verification, the AQP will not diverge by more than €0.05/kg from the AQP for all of the listed plants in the country as published in the Irish agri media
- The AQP will be the same for steers, heifers and young bulls under 16 months
- Breed Bonus paid for Angus breed
- A Hereford bonus will be paid to existing Hereford Prime members who supply Hereford cattle to ABP
- Contractual obligation made to the farmer by ABP on bonuses and minimum base price for animals meeting spec

**Pricing structure will be reviewed on an annual basis.*



KEY PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

Working with farming families to deliver more on farm efficiencies for all beef production systems

ANIMAL BREEDING & GENETICS

ABP has been conducting industry leading research in animal breeding and genetics since 2014 on its Demonstration Farm. Results have shown an increase in profit of up to €200 per animal is possible for farmers, based on data from over 4,000 animals. This Programme puts those results into action, combining cutting edge science with practised farming methods to deliver more security for beef farmers.



We aim to have all 2023 born calves genotyped prior to finishing

- Calves born in 2021 will not have a minimum genetic merit threshold and do not need a sire recorded
- A target of 20% of animals will be genotyped in Year 1



Sire must be recorded for calves born in 2022

- No minimum genetic threshold is required
- Calves bought without a sire recorded in marts or direct from farm can enter the Programme if they are genotyped



Using scientific research, a minimum genetic merit standard will be set out to improve on farm performance and reduce environmental impact.

For animals to qualify for the Programme and receive the Sustainability Bonus, a minimum genetic merit standard will be required for all animals born from 2023 onwards.

- Minimum genetic merit standard will differ for dairy and beef sourced cattle
- All eligible calves must have a known sire recorded on the AIMS registration system
- All beef calves bred from the dairy herd must be bred from a beef bull with a minimum beef sub index of >€35 within their DBI index and must

- be genotyped and pedigree registered to be eligible for the Programme
- All beef calves bred from the beef herd must be bred from a beef bull with a minimum terminal index of ≥€100 or be 5 stars within the Terminal or Maternal Index, within or across breed, and must be genotyped and pedigree registered

We aim to increase the minimum animal breeding standards as more beef bulls with high genetic merit become available as the Programme progresses. This will further improve the economic and environmental sustainability of our Programme cattle and provide even greater benefits to all farmers.



SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES

To participate in the Programme, farmers must be involved in one of the below environmental or biodiversity schemes. Additional environmental or biodiversity schemes may be included following the introduction of the new CAP.



- BDGP Scheme (Suckler)
- REAPS Scheme
- BEEP-S Scheme
- GLAS
- Soil Improvement Programme
- Dairy Beef Calf Programme

In addition to being a member of one of the above schemes, the criteria below are also required:

- Must have a farm Nutrient Management Plan
- All calves must be bred from a sire with a minimum Slaughter or Terminal Index Value starting from 2023
- Animals will only receive the Sustainability Bonus and minimum price if they are within their carcass type, age and specification

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE

A proactive approach to animal health and welfare is key to ensuring better outcomes and minimising use of antibiotics. Requirements are outlined below in line with the Bord Bia Quality Assurance (QA) Standard.

- Animal remedies to be recorded throughout the animal's life including vaccines, antibiotics and health incidence
- All animal remedies on record to be made available to ABP on request
- Farmers must have animal health plan developed in conjunction with their vet
- All other welfare measures above standard to be reviewed and paid accordingly
- All participating farmers will receive guidelines on animal health and welfare including vaccination programmes

MANAGEMENT & FEED

Requirements regarding management and feed are outlined below. Farmers are free to purchase feed from a supplier that suits them best so long as it is from a UFAS or Bord Bia approved mill.

- Regular weighings, these feed into ICBF (minimum 2 weighings per lifetime, these scales are available from Coop)
- All feed records to be recorded and made available to ABP on request
- All feed must be purchased from UFAS or Bord Bia approved mills
- Nutrition guidelines are developed by industry experts
- All participating farmers will receive animal nutrition guidelines

Sharing expertise and delivering better outcomes for both the dairy and beef sectors

DAIRY AND BEEF FARMER COLLABORATION

Collaboration between dairy and beef farmers is a key driver behind the Programme. We believe that both sectors must work in partnership to ensure the sustainability of both dairy and beef farmers. Together we're sharing expertise to deliver better outcomes for both dairy and beef farmers.

Our aim is to reach a greater uptake of sex semen, using better beef bred bulls on the dairy herd balanced for ease of calving, gestation and carcass quality. As a result, dairy farmers will benefit by having a guaranteed outlet for their calves.

ADVISORY & FARMER SUPPORT

Beef farmers within the Programme are provided with a dedicated advisory and support team. This support will be provided by the ABP farm liaisons officers. Our experts will support you every step of the way to:

- Ensure cattle are slaughtered younger through better genetics, nutrition and health
- Promote best practice in areas such as water quality, environmentally friendly farming practices and improved biodiversity on farm

CARCASS SPECIFICATION

HEIFER (SUCKLER BRED)	230-380kg carcass weight
	2+ to 4+
	Max age 26 months
HEIFER (DAIRY BRED)	230-360kg carcass weight
	2+ to 4+
	Max age 24 months
STEER (SUCKLER BRED)	270-400kg carcass weight
	2+ to 4+
	Max age 28 months
STEER (DAIRY BRED)	250-380kg carcass weight
	2+ to 4+
	Max age 26 months
YOUNG BULL	280-400kg carcass weight
	2+ to 4+
	Under 16 months
	Must agree with factory site prior to purchase
	Max 10% of young bulls under 16 months will qualify for the Programme

ALL PROGRAMME CATTLE TO RECEIVE SUSTAINABILITY BONUS FOR:

CARCASS CONFORMATION GRADE FROM E TO A P	Target is a P+ grade or greater
	Fat score 2+ to 4+

Farmers will receive an additional SBLAS Quality Assurance payment. There is also a Breed Bonus as per Hereford Prime and Angus Producer Group carcass specification.

1. ABP Ardee
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2. ABP Bandon
Kilbrogan, Bandon,
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3. ABP Cahir
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4. ABP Clones
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5. ABP Nenagh
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8. ABP Slaney
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